

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LILONG 00481 030958Z

ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1754

C O N F I D E N T I A L LILONGWE 0481

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, OVIP (BANDA, H. KAMUZU)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BANDA PLANS PRIVATE VISIT TO THE U.S.

REF: A. STATE 083528; B. LILONGWE 478; C. LILONGWE 383

1. PRESIDENT BANDA RECEIVED ME CORDIALLY AT 0900 SATURDAY MORNING TO TELL ME THAT "FRIENDS HAVE INVITED HIM TO VISIT THE U.S." AND THAT HE WILL BE DEPARTING MALAWI ON APRIL 14 FOR LONDON. ON APRIL 27 HE WILL LEAVE LONDON AND FLY DIRECTLY TO WASHINGTON. HE PLANS TO BE IN WASHINGTON ON APRIL 28 AND 29, DEPARTING AT SOME POINT ON THE 29TH FOR NASHVILLE TO VISIT MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE. FROM MEHARRY HE WILL FLY TO INDIANAPOLIS TO ATTEND UNIV. OF INDIANA COMMENCEMENT ON MAY 7 AND RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREE. WHILE IN INDIANA HE PLANS TO MAKE A SIDE TRIP TO VISIT HIS OLD PREP SCHOOL, WILBERFORCE, IN OHIO. PLANS TO LEAVE INDIANAPOLIS ON MAY 8 AND MAKE CONNECTIONS FOR FLIGHT TO LONDON ON THAT SAME DAY. HE MADE CLEAR THAT PURPOSE OF THE WASHINGTON STOP WOULD BE IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT PAY A COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT CARTER. HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN RECEIVED TWICE BY PRESIDENT KENNEDY, THE SECOND TIME JUST A FEW WEEKS BEFORE HIS TRAGIC DEATH WHICH HAD SHOCKED AND GRIEVED BANDA GREATLY. HE ALSO
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HAD CALLED ON PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE PLEASED ALSO TO CALL ON SECRETARY VANCE AND VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE, HAVING IN MIND THE LATTER'S SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR AFRICA. THIS SCHEDULE WOULD SEEM TO GIVE FRIDAY APRIL 28 AND POSSIBLY SATURDAY APRIL 29 AS FEASIBLE DATES FOR CALLS, IF HIS REQUESTS CAN BE GRANTED.

2. AS INSTRUCTED, I EXPLAINED TO BANDA THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S SCHEDULE IS EXTREMELY FULL AND THAT I CANNOT GIVE HIM ANY ASSURANCES WITH REGARD TO HIS REQUEST BUT THAT I WOULD RECOMMEND STRONGLY THAT IT BE GRANTED IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. BANDA DID NOT PRESS AND SEEMED QUITE RELAXED ABOUT THE WHOLE THING.

3. SUBSEQUENT TO ABOVE CONVERSATION I LEARNED THAT CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE MENTIONED IN REF C WAS TOLD BY JOHN NGWIRI LATTER HAD NOT CLEARED HIS "SOUNDING" WITH BANDA AND WAS APPARENTLY FISHING FOR AN OFFICIAL INVITATION. WE SPECULATE THAT HE HOPED TO USE THIS TO GAIN FAVOR WITH BANDA HAD HE BEEN SUCCESSFUL.

4. PERMSEC KACHINGWE SAW ME AFTER MY BRIEF MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT AND ASKED FOR HELP IN HOTEL RECOMMENDATIONS. HE HAD NOT YET TOLD PRESIDENT BANDA OF MY PLANNED DEPARTURE BUT SAID HE WOULD DO SO SOMETIME THIS WEEK.
STEVENSON

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